THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) to (c) Government are firmly resolved to take all necessary measures to preserve the security and territorial integrity of India. Towards attaining this goal whatever measures are considered necessary are taken.

India has reiterated its desire to resume the Composite Dialogue which *inter alia* includes an official level dialogue on the subject of Siachen.

Re-opening of Highways with Bangladesh and Pakistan

*550. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the highways Government propose to re-open with the neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan;

(b) whether Government propose to take into account the recent developments like killing of innocent people before finalizing the proposal; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any other step for re-opening of such routes?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) to (c) The Government are of the view that the promotion of people-to-people contacts by all means including making travel between India and neighbouring countries as simple and easy as possible will contribute to the development of friendly ties.

In keeping with this approach, Government have been working with the Government of Bangladesh on increasing and diversifying the transport linkages between the two countries. On July 10, 2001 an Agreement was signed to introduce a bus service between Agartala and Dhaka. An Agreement was also signed on July 12, 2001 to start a passenger train service between India and Bangladesh.

Similarly, on July 9, 2001 Government announced that Pakistani passport holders will be allowed to come by the road route and obtain visas at the check posts at Attari. An additional check post will be opened at Munabao, in Rajasthan. Similar check posts will also be opened at designated points along the International Border and Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir.

During a meeting with the Pakistan Foreign Secretary, on the sidelines of the recently concluded meeting of the SAARC Standing Committee of Foreign

Secretaries at Colombo (9-10 August 2001), Indian Foreign Secretary urged Pakistan to facilitate implementation of these steps and consider taking similar measures of its own.

Confidential Reports of IPS and IFS Officers

*551 SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a lot of controversy regarding writing of Confidential Reports of the officers like SSPs, District Forest Officers by the District Magistrate (IAS Officers), which has received wide publicity in media on pros and cons basis;

(b) if so, the background of the existing orders and rules in this regard;

(c) whether Government have received any representation from IPS and IFS Officers' Associations etc., against the existing practice;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government propose to review and amend the existing orders and rules; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSION (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) to (f) In a judgement delivered on 22.09.2000 in the matter of T.N. Godavarman Thirumulkpad *Vs.* Union of India and Santosh Bharti *Vs.* State of Madhya Pradesh, the Hon'ble Supreme Court, while deciding the question as to who is the authority competent to write Confidential Report of an officer belonging to the Indian Forest Service (IFS) within the meaning of the provisions of All India Service (Confidential Rolls) Rules, 1970, had held that upto the officer of the rank of Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, the reporting authority has to be the immediately superior officer within the Forest Department. The Supreme Court had taken note of the decision in State of Haryana *Vs.* Shri P. C. Wadhwa and Anr. 1987 (2) SCR.1030 and directed the State of Madhya Pradesh to pass appropriate orders enu: .erating the reporting authorities.

Following the judgement in P.C. Wadhwa case, referred to above, the All India Service (Confidential Rolls) Rules, 1970 had been amended on 8.12.87. Rule 2(a), 2(e) and 2(f) of these Rules defining 'accepting authority', 'reporting